

# Horden Parish Council

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Horden Social Welfare Centre  
Seventh Street  
Horden, County Durham  
SR8 4LX  
Tel: 0191 518 0823

26 September 2025

Dear Member

You are summoned to attend the Horden Parish Council Meeting to be held in Horden Social Welfare Centre, Seventh Street, Horden on Thursday 2 October 2025 at 6pm.

## **HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL ORDER OF BUSINESS** **Meeting to be held 2 October 2025**

1. **Apologies for Absence** – to consider for approval.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – to receive declarations of interest from Members on items of the agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct.
3. **Minutes of the Horden Parish Council Meeting held 4 September 2025 (enclosed)** – to consider for approval.
4. **Public Participation** – to receive any representations or questions from the public in accordance with standing orders 3 e-g. ***Members of the Public are invited to address the Parish Council on matters relating to the agenda for up to 3 minutes per person during a period not exceeding 20 minutes.***
5. **Minutes of the Personnel Meeting** – to receive minutes of meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and 22 August 2025.
6. **Notes of the Events Management Working Group** – to consider recommendations.
7. **Register of Delegated Decisions** – to note there are no additional decisions to approve.
8. **Damage and Incident Report (enclosed)** – to consider report.
9. **Cemetery Burial and Income Report 24/8/25 – 21/9/25 (enclosed)** – to receive the information.
10. **County Councillor Update** – to receive the information.
11. **Cash Withdrawals and Debit Card Transactions to July 2025 (enclosed)** – to approve report.
12. **Invoices for endorsement for payment (enclosed)** – to approve for payment.
13. **Members/Officers Allowances** – to consider any claims for approval.
14. **SWC Water Heating Unit** – to consider the report.
15. **Durham County Council Consultations:**
  - a) **Budget Proposals for 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/7-2029/30** – to consider a response.
  - b) **Exceptions to the Empty and Unfurnished Properties and Second Homes Council Tax Premium** – to consider a response.



Samantha Shippen  
Clerk to the Council  
26 September 2025

To: All Members of Horden Parish Council/cc Public Notice

**Agenda Item 3**

**HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Meeting held 4 September 2025**

- Present:** Councillor F Leadbitter (Chairman)  
Councillors C Armstrong, R Bagnall, T Baldersera, C Cain, E Laing, W Morrow, C Robson, D Tait, T Usher and J Ward.
- Staff:** Mrs S Shippen (Clerk to the Council) and Mr C Jackson (Deputy Clerk)
- Other:** 6 Members of the Pubic were present.
- HPC 25/26/085** **Apologies for Absence.**  
**RESOLVED:** That apologies be **APPROVED** for Councillor D Bellingham, G Wetherell, L Williams and F Winrow.
- HPC 25/26/086** **Declarations of Interest.**  
**RESOLVED:** Councillor F Leadbitter declared an interest in item17.
- HPC 25/26/087** **Minutes of the Horden Parish Council Meeting held 3 July 2025.**  
**RESOLVED:** The minutes be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- HPC 25/26/088** **Public Participation.**  
J Pinnington from the Army Cadets introduced herself and explained the attachment currently work with 45 young people and how support from the Council will increase the numbers of young people engaged and aid with retaining existing young people. J Pinnington thanked the Council for their consideration to support the group.
- HPC 25/26/089** **Horden Numbered Streets Planning Application Ref: DM/25/02205/FPA.**  
S Bell and S Longstaff from ELG Planning provided an update on the planning application they have submitted to Durham County Council and answered questions. The current proposal is to replace 110 houses with 105 with an option to extend. Several questions arose such as access to the school during works, access to new houses, play provision, road closures. The council thanked Steve and Steve for their presentation.  
  
**RESOLVED:** The Council **APPROVE** supporting the planning application with additional comments to include access to school and a preference to enhance existing play provision under section 106.
- HPC 25/26/090** The Chair requested to move agenda item 23 and consider the request. Council **AGREED** to move Agenda Item 23.
- HPC 25/26/091** **Army Cadets Donation Request.**  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the request to the sum of £2,000 and **ADVISE** Officers to work with the Cadets to purchase some of the equipment requested.
- HPC 25/26/092** **Register of Delegated Decisions.**  
There were no delegated decisions to report.
- HPC 25/26/093** **Damage and Incident Report.**  
**RESOLVED:** Council **NOTE** the report.
- HPC 25/26/094** **Cemetery Burial and Income Report 23/6/25-23/8/25.**  
**RESOLVED:** Council **RECIEVE** the information.
- HPC 25/26/095** **Outdoor Team Manager Report.**  
**RESOLVED:** Council **NOTE** the report.
- HPC 25/26/096** **County Councillor Update.**  
**RESOLVED:** Council **NOTE** the report.
- HPC 25/26/097** **Parish Council Financial**  
**a) Bank Balances**  
**RESOLVED:** Council **RECEIVE** the information.

- HPC  
25/26/098 b) Finance report.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **RECEIVE** the information
- HPC  
25/26/099 c) Cash Withdrawals and Debit Card Transaction to 31 July 2025.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the report.
- HPC  
25/26/100 d) Petty Cash report to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the report.
- HPC  
25/26/101 e) Bank Transfers  
The Clerk requested that £80,000 be transferred from the CCLA account to the Current account of which £40,000 would be transferred to the Horden Recreation Ground account. **RESOLVED:** Council **ENDORSE** transfer of funds from the CCLA bank account to the Current account.
- HPC  
25/26/102 f) Bank Signatories  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the adding of Councillor W Morrow to the bank account.
- HPC  
25/26/103 Invoices for endorsement for payment.  
**RESOLVED:** To **ENDORSE** payment of the attached schedule of invoices plus the additional schedule totalling £55,231.36. Councillors F Leadbitter and W Morrow to authorise.
- HPC  
25/26/104 Members/Officers Allowances.  
There were no allowances claims made.
- HPC  
25/26/105 Participation allowance:  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** to move funds totalling £1,715.76 to the Chairmans allowance.
- HPC  
25/26/106 Appointment of Internal Audit 2025/26.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** to appoint Steven Ragg as Internal Audit for 2025/26.
- CCLA Correspondence.
- HPC  
25/26/107 a) CCLA/Juniper IM Group.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **RECEIVE** the information.
- HPC  
25/26/108 b) CCLA Changes to charges.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **RECEIVE** the information.
- Cllr F Leadbitter left the meeting at 7.11pm.  
Cllr R Bagnall took over as Chair.*
- HPC  
25/26/109 Station Road Allotments, Provision of New Container.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the purchase of a new container to the sum of up to £4,000.
- Cllr F Leadbitter entered the meeting at 7.15pm  
Cllr F Leadbitter took over as Chair.*
- HPC  
25/26/110 Horden Minewater.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the appointment of Councillors R Bagnall and W Morrow to the Steering Group.
- Remembrance Sunday
- HPC  
25/26/111 a) Wreath  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** purchasing 2 Type 2 Wreaths.
- HPC  
25/26/112 b) Wreath Laying  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** the report.
- HPC  
25/26/113 Tuesday Breakfast Club.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **RECEIVE** the information.
- HPC  
25/26/114 Durham County Council HMO Consultation.  
**RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** to support the consultation proposal.

**HPC      Flower and Vegetable Show 2026.****25/26/115      RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** to hold a Flower and Vegetable Show in 2026.**HPC      County Durham Local Historic Flag.****25/26/116      RESOLVED:** Council **APPROVE** to purchase three flags and raise them on 20 March and 23 July.**HPC      CPRE Membership.****25/26/117      RESOLVED:** Council **AGREED** to decline membership.**HPC      NAC General Management Meeting Invitation.****25/26/118      RESOLVED:** Council **AGREED** no response required.*Meeting concluded at 7:40pm*



**Horden Parish Council Invoices for Payment August 2025**

SUPPLIER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	Pay Ref:
A1 Trophies	01/09/2025	Annual Flower/Veg Engravings	£25.00	BACS
Affordable Landscapes	07/05/2025	Landscaping Wild Flower area at Cemetery	£420.00	BACS
Amazon	06/08/2025	Toilet Cleaner	£15.99	BACS
Amazon	06/08/2025	Paper Towels, disinfectant, toilet roll and bin bags	£111.39	BACS
Banner	13/08/2025	Velcro Stick on Coin Hooks	£32.98	BACS
Banner	07/08/2025	Heavy Duty Refuse Sacks	£67.39	BACS
Banner	29/08/2025	Laminating Puches and Blu Tack	£27.82	BACS
Co-op Bank	01/08/2025	Bank Charges	£84.92	D/D
Corona Energy	06/08/2025	Sun Road Electricity 01/07/25-31/07/25	£96.54	D/D
Corona Energy	06/08/2025	Memorial Park Electricity 01/07/25-31/07/25	£26.91	D/D
Culligan	15/08/2025	Water Cooler Rental - Aug 25	£31.80	D/D
DAC Beechcroft	30/07/2025	VAT element of Professional Fee (insurance claim)	£952.90	BACS
Document Solutions	29/08/2025	Photocopying for August 25	£44.78	D/D
Eon Next	04/08/2025	Gas SWC 01/07/25-03/08/25	£10.71	D/D
Eon Next	04/08/2025	Electricity Cemetery 01/07/25-31/07/25	£27.28	D/D
Eon Next	01/09/2025	Electricity Cemetery 01/08/25-31/08/25	£24.45	D/D
Eon Next	01/09/2025	Gas SWC 04/08/25-31/08/25	£8.82	D/D
Horden Heritage Centre	23/07/2025	Printing costs for Heritage Display	£54.00	BACS
ITC	31/08/2025	IT Services: Office 365, Backup, Domain Hosting and Managed Services	£458.16	D/D
JR Productions	14/08/2025	Funfair Games Package	£250.00	BACS
Microshade	01/08/2025	Hosted Application Service - Rialtas Aug	£144.00	BACS
MKM	18/08/2025	Sand, Gravel, Cement and Bricks - Cemetery	£230.63	BACS
Octopus Energy	22/08/2025	Cemetery Lodge Energy Costs 22/07/25-20/08/25	£32.66	BACS
Octopus Energy	23/08/2025	Welfare House Energy Costs 22/07/25-21/08/25	£32.49	BACS
Rickerby Ltd	31/07/2025	Strimmer Heads and Cords	£200.73	BACS
Salus	20/08/2025	Event Medical Cover - Miners Picnic	£154.80	BACS
Scottish Power	07/08/2025	SWC Electricity 04/07/25-07/08/25	£504.30	D/D
Screwfix	15/08/2025	5 Litre 2 Stroke Oil	£19.99	BACS
Select Telecom	31/07/2025	Phone Lines/Calls/Internet Aug 25	£125.08	D/D
WEX	04/08/2025	Equipment Fuel	£109.92	D/D
WEX	01/09/2025	Equipment Fuel - Cemetery	£81.82	D/D
<b>OTHER PAYMENTS</b>				
Co-op Bank	07/08/2025	Wages Week 18	£5,565.01	BACS
Co-op Bank	14/08/2025	Wages Week 19	£5,565.01	BACS
Co-op Bank	21/08/2025	Wages Week 20	£5,564.61	BACS
Co-op Bank	28/08/2025	Wages Week 21	£6,171.31	BACS
Co-op Bank	01/09/2025	Wages Week 22	£7,181.80	BACS
Durham County Council	01/09/2025	Superannuation Weeks 18-22	£10,073.86	BACS
HMRC	01/09/2025	PAYE Weeks 18-22	£10,701.50	BACS
<b>Horden Parish Council AUGUST 2025 TOTAL</b>			<b>£55,231.36</b>	

**HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of Meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**Present:** Councillor L Williams (Chairman).  
 Councillors J Ward and G Wetherell.

**Staff:** Mrs S Shippen, Clerk to the Council.

**PERS** **Apologies for Absence**  
**25/26/001** No apologies received.

**PERS** **Declarations of Interest**  
**25/26/002** There were no declarations of interest.

**PERS** **Minutes of Personnel Committee held 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024**  
**25/26/003** **RESOLVED** that the minutes, be **APPROVED**.

**PERS** **Exclusion of Press and Public**  
**25/26/004** **RESOLVED** that due to the nature of the business relating to staff, that the press and public be excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

**PERS** **Staff Matters.**  
**25/26/005** The Clerk presented a report covering 6 areas which were discussed by the Committee in depth.

**1. Outdoor Staff Structure Update**

The Clerk advised that the Outdoor Team Manager is quickly getting to grips with Horden PC operationally. The Outdoor Team Supervisor has been away from work which has undoubtedly had an impact on progress. Work on the management plans has commenced and the Manager has committed to have a first draft by Christmas 2025.

A discussion around opening & locking parks took place.

*The Clerk to the Council was requested to step out of the meeting while a discussion took place.*

**RESOLVED** that support be offered to the Outdoor Team Manager to achieve the Management Plan review and the update be **NOTED**.

**2. Damage & Incident Reports**

The Committee considered reports relating to the recent break in at the cemetery.

**RESOLVED** that an investigation be undertaken by the Deputy Clerk who would report the findings to the Clerk to the Council.

**3. HR Policy Review**

*The item was deferred to the following meeting due to time constraints.*

**4. Vacant Posts**

The Clerk to the Council gave an update on vacant posts, SWC Cleaner and Projects & Facilities Officer.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk bring the documentation regarding the Projects & Facilities Officer to the next meeting for consideration.

Meeting was adjourned at 4.30pm to reconvene on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 2.30pm in order to conclude the business.

**HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of Meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**Present:** Councillor L Williams (Chairman).  
 Councillors J Ward and G Wetherell.

**Staff:** Mrs S Shippen, Clerk to the Council.

*The meeting was reconvened from the meeting adjourned on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025.*

**PERS**  
**25/26/006**

**1. HR Policy Review**

The Clerk to the Council presented the following model draft HR policy documents from NALC and gave advice on adaptations relevant to the Council.

- **Annual Leave Policy**
- **Carers Leave Policy**
- **Compassionate Leave Policy**
- **Disciplinary Policy**
- **Emergency/Dependants Leave Policy**
- **Expenses Policy**
- **Flexible Working Policy**
- **Grievance Policy**
- **Home-working Policy**
- **Lone Worker Policy**
- **Maternity Leave and Pay Policy**
- **Paternity leave and Pay Policy**
- **Performance Improvement Policy & Procedure**
- **Sickness Absence Policy**
- **Training & Development Policy**

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk update the policies to fit the needs of the Council and commence a consultation with staff.

**2. Vacant Posts**

The Clerk to the Council presented the job description and person specification for the Projects & Facilities Officer.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk review the documentation and draft an advert for the Projects & Facilities Officer.

**3. Officer & Member Roles**

**RESOLVED** that Members be reminded of the roles & responsibilities documents included in councillor packs.

**4. Clerk to the Council Planned Retirement**

The Clerk updated the Committee on her plans for retirement in March 2026.

**RESOLVED** that a future meeting consider transition arrangements.

Meeting finished at 3.50m..

**HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of Meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Present:** Councillor L Williams (Chairman).  
 Councillors C Cain, J Ward and G Wetherell.  
**Staff:** Mrs S Shippen, Clerk to the Council, Mr J Peace, Outdoor Team Manager.

**PERS**            **Apologies for Absence**  
**25/26/007**    No apologies were received.

**PERS**            **Declarations of Interest**  
**25/26/008**    No declarations were received.

**PERS**            **Minutes of the Personnel Committee held 13<sup>th</sup> June and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**  
**25/26/009**    This item was deferred.

**PERS**            **Exclusion of Press and Public**  
**25/26/010**    **RESOLVED** that due to the nature of the business relating to staff, that the press and public be excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

**PERS**            **Staff Matters.**  
**25/26/011**    The Clerk to the Council advised of a request to reduce working hours by the Outdoor Team Manager. The Committee discussed the request with the Outdoor Team Manager who then left the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the Outdoor Team Manager reduce hour to three days per week with flexibility when required to work additional hours in consultation with the Clerk.

Meeting finished at 3.55pm.

**HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of Meeting held 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025**

**Present:** Councillor L Williams (Chairman).  
 Councillors C Cain, J Ward and G Wetherell.  
**Staff:** Mrs S Shippen, Clerk to the Council.

**PERS**            **Apologies for Absence**  
**25/26/012**    No apologies were received.

**PERS**            **Declarations of Interest**  
**25/26/013**    No declarations were received.

**PERS**            **Minutes of the Personnel Committees held 13<sup>th</sup> June, 16<sup>th</sup> June and 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025**  
**25/26/014**    **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

**PERS**            **2025/26 NJC Pay Award.**  
**25/26/015**    The Clerk to the Council advised of the pay settlement for 2025/26 and back pay calculation at 3.2% which was below that budgeted.

**RESOLVED** that the 2025/26 Pay Award be **NOTED** for payment in the first week of September and staff be notified accordingly.

Meeting finished at 2.13pm.

## **EVENTS MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP**

### **Meeting Attendance**

SWC and Events Manager Angela Lee, Cllr Cheryl Robson and Cllr Jackie Ward

### **Apologies**

Cllr Rodie Bagnall

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 The purpose of this meeting was to discuss if it is feasible for the go ahead of the Lantern Parade which was deferred from a previous meeting.
- 1.2 Creative Youth Opportunities have quoted £500 for the following:  
Workshops  
Planning and Preparation  
Staff coordination and Risk Assessment to escort children and their parents from the Welfare Centre to the Memorial Park for the annual Christmas Tree Lighting event.
- 1.3 The working group discussed an alternative use for this budget, to have a Santa to give out a small gift or small bag of sweets to all children attending the annual Christmas Tree Lighting event. The cost would be for the gift or small bag of sweets estimate cost £150

### **2 Remembrance Sunday**

- 2.1 To purchase two statues for display at the Remembrance Day service as a reminder of our Nations fallen soldiers and those who continue to serve.
- 2.2 An unknown Tommy and Unknown Woman silhouettes statues made from Aluminium Composite (3mm thick) 4ft 10in including the base with angle irons to secure in the ground. Cost £325
- 2.3 These would be used at future Remembrance Day, VE Day events, every statue is made to order by veterans

### **3 Silhouettes**

- 3.1 To invite Horden Residents to come along to the Welfare Centre on a chosen day to write names of their own family veterans on Silhouettes to display in the flower beds in the Memorial Park as a mark of respect on Remembrance Sunday

### **4 Recommendation**

- 4.1 For Council Members to discuss if the Lantern Parade can continue as an annual event to coincide with the Christmas Tree Lighting Event or agree to the alternative Santa to give out a small gift or small bag of sweets
- 4.2 To agree the purchase of the two silhouettes
- 4.3 To agree for veterans names to be wrote on silhouettes for display on Remembrance Sunday

**Angela Lee**

**SWC and Events Manager**

## UNKNOWN TOMMY AND UNKNOWN WOMEN SILHOUETTES



# HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## DAMAGE/INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date and time of Damage/Incident:	19-9-25 8-20AM Approx.
Location:	Memorial Park
Damage Found (please give as much detail as possible)	big shackle code lock broken off main gates
incident NO.	19-9-25-84
crime ref NO.	CR100638061

Completed by: R. H. H. H. Date: 19-9-25

Police Notified: ☒ YES / NO Officer dealing: —

Time Police notified: 9-00AM Approx.

Remedial Action Taken:

Temp lock put in place - Re-order replacement.

### OFFICE USE:

Has available CCTV been checked: YES / NO

Is this an Insurance Claim: YES / NO UNDER EXCESS AMOUNT

If yes, have photographs, quotations and details been passed to the Deputy Clerk/RFO:

Is this a disposal of an Asset: YES / NO

If yes, has a disposal form been completed and handed to the Deputy Clerk/RFO:

Completed by: C. Jackson Date: 19/09/25

Date received by Parish Council Office: 19/09/25



**Thorpe Road Cemetery Report 24th August To 21st September 2025**

<b>INTERMENT (inc. Ashes)</b>			
<b>PLOT</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>RESIDENT</b>	<b>FEE</b>
T23	FULL BURIAL	YES	£680.00
GARDEN D 76	ASHES	NO	£803.00
GARDEN D 77	ASHES	YES	£227.00
T24	FULL BURIAL	YES	£680.00
K134	FULL BURIAL	YES	£340.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,730.00</b>

<b>PURCHASE OF PLOT - EXCLUSIVE RIGHT</b>			
<b>PLOT</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>		<b>FEE</b>
T23	NEW PURCHASE	YES	£567.00
GARDEN D 76	NEW PURCHASE	NO	£803.00
GARDEN D 77	NEW PURCHASE	YES	£227.00
T24	NEW PURCHASE	YES	£567.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,164.00</b>

<b>SUPPLY OF IMMOVABLE MEMORIAL</b>			
<b>PLOT</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>RESIDENT</b>	<b>FEE</b>
L43	ADD INSCRIPTION	YES	£72
T20	MEMORIAL	YES	£113
P43	MEMORIAL	YES	£113.00
S12	MEMORIAL	NO	£268.00
GARDEN D 71	MEMORIAL	NO	£268.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£834.00</b>

<b>SUPPLY OF MEMORIAL PLAQUE</b>			<b>FEE</b>
PLAQUE		YES	£283.00
PLAQUE		YES	£283.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£566.00</b>

<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			<b>FEE</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
		<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£6,294.00</b>

Horden Parish Council 06

25 Sep 2025

**Durham County Councillor Report**

**1. Committee Progress**

I have been invited to sit on the Combined Fire Authority Committee and have attended a training awareness course in Bowburn at the HQ. There are many catch up committees in Sep and I was away a few days 4 – 7 Sep. Safer Stronger Committee with Superintendent Bickford and his team talked through Op ENDURANCE (Bikes) and Op TRAILBLAZER (ASB hotspots). I am also a permanent member of the Police and Crime Commissioner panel where I get to put concerns regarding residents safety directly to the Commissioner and Chief Constable.

**2. Matters from Residents**

Horden Mater Plan planning is now in and on the DCC Website for all to read. Some of the reported broken/damaged fences across the Ward have been repaired to a good standard and I always pay the resident a visit to make sure. Empty Houses continue to be an issue throughout the Ward and I am expecting to attend formal training on the issue 30 Sep, Post this report. Funding to Jnr Park Run approved. There has been a steady flow of issues from building regulations to residents requiring re-housing for a number of reasons. At HRA a further presentation was provided regarding the Warm Minewater Project and some residents raised concerns of intimidation, ASB and concern regarding the flags that have been placed on many lampposts across the Ward.

**3. Meetings with Residents**

I am expecting to hold another surgery in Oct including an event for Veterans and would be grateful if Parish/Town Councillors would support if they wish. I have a week of annual leave from 5<sup>th</sup>. There are many individual cases ongoing and I have visited residents personally while I try to work through resolutions from the council.

There remains some problems with regard to Allotments controlled by DCC. Cllr Nicola Lyons had taken control of this matter as part of the cabinet but I am hoping to gain traction in getting the allotments back under association. Could the Parish Council assist with this?

**4. Council Matters**

Council officers attended the damaged fenceline at Horden Crossroads Allotments along with members of Horden Together and Cllr Robson in the absence of Cllr Wetherell. It was agreed by them that the fence was indeed council responsibility but we are going to take a joint approach in getting a hedge line in places where the council will maintain in the future.

*(Electronically Signed)*

Cllr Dawn Bellingham  
Horden and Dene House

**Cash Withdrawals & Debit Card Transactions:**

18/08/2025 – Richardson Tyre Centre – New Tyre and repair – CJ - £116.00  
19/08/2025 – Cash Withdrawal – Petty Cash – CJ - £80.00  
21/08/2025 – Asda – Book Tokens for Events – CJ - £30.00  
22/08/2025 – Cash Withdrawal – Prize Monies for Flower and Vegetable Show -SS - £1,388.00  
22/08/2025 – Prince Bishops Car Park – Car Park Charge – SS - £2.40  
22/08/2025 – WelMedical – Electrode Pads for De-Fib – CJ - £75.18

**TOTAL £1,691.58**

**Horden Parish Council Invoices for Payment September 2025**

SUPPLIER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	Pay Ref:
Amazon	22/09/2025	Urinal descaler	£43.99	BACS
Banner	22/09/2025	Cleaning Products (blue roll, toilet cleaner, gloves)	£53.91	BACS
Banner	23/09/2025	Jumbo Toilet rolls	£43.97	BACS
Banner	23/09/2025	50 2nd Class stamps	£43.50	BACS
Co-op Bank	01/09/2025	BACS/FD Online Fees July 25	£84.82	D/D
Co-op Bank	01/09/2025	BACS/FD Online Fees August 25	£61.00	D/D
Corona	04/09/2025	Memorial Park Electricity August 2025	£26.03	D/D
Corona	04/09/2025	Sun Road Electricity August 2025	£119.18	D/D
Culligan	15/09/2025	Water Cooler Rental August 25	£31.80	D/D
Geo Robinson & Son	31/08/2025	Watering Cans	£29.70	BACS
Horden Colliery Heritage Centre and Tea Rooms	23/08/2025	Afternoon Teas for 6	£81.00	BACS
Kraftwerx	17/09/2025	Memorial Park fence repair	£2,580.00	BACS
Magnum Cleaning Services	10/09/2025	SWC Window Cleaning	£45.00	BACS
Microshade	01/09/2025	Hosted Application Service - September 25	£144.00	BACS
Octopus Energy	22/09/2025	Cem Lodge Energy 22/08-21/09/25	£33.45	BACS
RNB Roofing	19/09/2025	Welfare Park reflash roof with autolead	£375.00	BACS
Scottish Power	11/09/2025	SWC Electricity for 08/08-11/09/25	£500.48	D/D
Select Telecom	31/08/2025	Admin Phone Lines/Calls/Internet - August 25	£118.51	D/D
Shoreline Fire Compliance Ltd	08/09/2025	Call out fee for PSU fault	£80.00	BACS
Siemens	14/09/2025	Photocopier lease charge	£148.80	D/D
SLCC	12/09/2025	National Conference fee	£703.20	BACS
TJ's Heating and Home Improvements	14/09/2025	Kitchen Waste unit and outside Aluminium panels repair	£225.00	BACS
TJ's Heating and Home Improvements	14/09/2025	Men's Upstairs Toilet repair	£245.00	BACS
Treasured Memories	05/09/2025	Memorial Plaque	£104.82	BACS
Treasured Memories	19/09/2025	Memorial Plaque	£200.94	BACS
Wave	11/09/2025	Cemetery Lodge Water charges	£96.25	BACS
Wex	31/08/2025	Vehicle Trackers	£14.40	D/D
<b>OTHER PAYMENTS</b>				
Co-op Bank		Wages Week 23	£5,721.48	BACS
Co-op Bank		Wages Week 24	£5,705.30	BACS
Co-op Bank		Wages Week 25	£5,310.23	BACS
		<b>Horden Parish Council SEPTEMBER 2025 TOTAL</b>	<b>£22,970.76</b>	

**HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Welfare Centre has been without hot water for a number of months due to an issue with the boilers
- 1.2 DCC had to source a specialist engineer to attend as this was a problem that they were unable to repair themselves.
- 1.3 The specialist engineer from Glenfield Energy Solutions had advised there is a basic obsolete controller that is housed in an adaptable box, and had highlighted that there was asbestos in the plantroom. A copy of the asbestos report was provided
- 1.4 Glenfield have come back with a cost of £8000 to replace the temperature panel/replacement system. I have requested a breakdown of costs.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Council Members to discuss if this cost is feasible given that both Boilers need to be replaced due to both boilers now being obsolete.
- 2.2 Council Members to agreed that this job will go to tender as these are industrial boilers.

**Angela Lee**

**SWC Building and Events Manager**

**October**

**From:** CDALC <CDALC@durham.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 24 September 2025 15:57

**Subject:** DCC consultations Budget proposals for 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27-2029/30 and Exceptions to the Empty and Unfurnished Properties and Second Homes Council Tax Premium - consultation letter

Dear clerks, council chairs and executive committee members,

Please find attached and below details of two important consultations which have been launched by DCC.

- Budget Proposals for 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/7-2029/30, and
- Exceptions to the Empty and Unfurnished Properties and Second Homes Council Tax Premium

The attached letter sets out proposals for different rates of Council Tax increases from zero to 5% and the implications over the next 4 years for the council's deficit and there is also a separate consultation to reduce the council tax exemption opportunities for empty and unfurnished properties and second homes which will have some impact on the savings needed.

You can find further details of both consultations on the [letstalkcountydurham website](https://letstalkcountydurham.org.uk) which gives details on how to respond. These are extremely important consultations and require some careful reading of the accompanying information. The Government expects DCC to raise council tax by the maximum permitted levels over the next three years ie 5% a year, whereas these proposals include increases less than this, or at zero.

We urge your councils to consider these consultations and respond accordingly.

Kind regards

Audrey

Audrey Christie

Executive Officer (Tues to Fri)

07708327943

Janet Wainwright

Finance and Admin Officer (Weds and Thurs)

07708327285

Web: <https://cdalc.info/>



Dear **County Durham Association of Local Councils**,

Please see attached a consultation letter with regards to the current public consultation on the Council's budget which is now live.

The savings for 2026/27 and later years which are included in the current MTFP projections now total £3.810 million for 2026/27, £1.662 million for 2027/28 and £0.189 million for 2027/28 - £5.662 million across the next four years.

As part of this consultation, we ask for views on:

- Proposed savings across back-office functions, frontline services, and income generation for the next financial year 2026/27.
- Options for Council Tax increases over the next four years, including scenarios ranging from no increase to a 5% annual rise.
- Where and in what services we might make savings in future years

We are considering making changes to our Section 13A policy which provides discretionary exemptions to the Council Tax premium on empty and unfurnished properties and second homes.

As part of the **Exceptions to the Empty and Unfurnished Properties and Second Homes Council Tax Premium consultation** we are considering the following options:

- Option 1: Fully align the existing Section 13A policy with the Government regulations
- Option 2: Introduce a 12 month time limit cap to our Section 13A policy
- Option 3: No changes to the current Section 13A policy


I would appreciate that you take the time to read and cascade this letter to all of your councils.

The deadline for responses is **Friday 14 November 2025**.

Feedback is welcome directly via the online survey available [here](#) or alternatively you can email: [letstalkcountydurham@durham.gov.uk](mailto:letstalkcountydurham@durham.gov.uk)

Many thanks

Paul Darby



Corporate Director of Resources  
Durham County Council  
Tel: [03000 261 930](tel:03000261930)

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Please note: My personal work style may involve out-of-hours messages and replies, with no expectation of out-of-hours responses from recipients 🙄

Contact: Paul Darby  
Direct Tel: 03000 261 930  
email: [paul.darby@durham.gov.uk](mailto:paul.darby@durham.gov.uk)  
Your ref:  
Our ref:



19 September 2025

Dear Colleague

### **Consultation on further proposals to balance the Council budget**

On 17 September 2025, the Council published an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period between 2026/27 and 2029/30, which was presented to our Cabinet – I have attached a link to the report [here](#).

The report reflects several updated financial assumptions, including a long-awaited commitment from the Government to reform how local government is funded, to address some of the inequities in local government funding and provide a three-year financial settlement. However, the scale and timing of these funding changes remain uncertain and will not be confirmed until late December 2025, which makes financial planning particularly for 2026/27 very challenging. The Government has also indicated that it expects councils to raise council tax by the maximum permitted levels over the next three years – which in our case would be an annual increase of 5% per annum – and has factored this into its core spending power that local authorities have available to spend. If the Council does not apply increases in line with the Government's expectations, then it faces a real terms cut in funding over the next three years.

As a council, we also continue to operate in a period of significant financial uncertainty due to the impact of high levels of inflation and increased demand for many of our statutory services, particularly Children and Adult Social Care, Special Educational Needs and **Resources**

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Disability Services and in Home to School Transport. These concerns continue to impact significantly on our financial planning, with the council's spending pressures influenced by matters outside its control relating to national pay bargaining arrangements and national Government policy, particularly in relation to the National Living Wage and on changes to waste management.

Our Cabinet recognise the severe financial challenges which the Council faces and accept that there remains significant uncertainty around the scale of funding changes the Government has indicated it will make. Cabinet has also indicated it wishes to ensure Council Tax increases are kept to an absolute minimum and ideally that we do not increase the Council Tax at all. As a result, we have as a default position, assumed that Council Tax increases will not take place across the four-year period of the medium-term financial planning period for financial forecasting purposes.

The Council has cost pressures across the next four year period totalling £117.8 million (of which £33.6 million fall in 2026/27). None of these cost pressures are local policy driven or "nice to haves", they are unavoidable cost pressures linked to inflation or national policy decisions.

Based on no council tax increases being applied, and modest assumptions for the potential impact of the proposed local government funding reforms, we estimate total savings required at this stage for 2026/27 to balance the budget to be circa £21.0 million, and circa £71.0 million across a four-year period. These assumptions are after delivery of circa £5.662 million of savings across the next three years that were agreed as part of the last MTFP planning process, and which include a range of areas, including:

- Savings from the back office and efficiencies - £1.993 million
- Income raising and reductions in third party contributions - £1.162 million
- Savings in how we deliver front-line services - £2.507 million.

As part of these £5.662 million of savings proposals, the Council is undertaking a separate consultation on changes to our Section 13A Policy, which provides discretionary exemptions to the Council Tax premiums on long-term empty and unfurnished properties and on second homes. This consultation will run until 14 November 2025 and will inform decisions on potential changes to that policy, with options to tighten and limit the scale of discretionary exemptions applied.

Over the summer we have also consulted on a range of potential changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, to reduce the cost of the scheme, which provides a means tested reduction in council tax liabilities for pensioners and working age households based

on their household income and circumstances. The consultation and potential changes relate to the scheme that covers working age households only, as pensioners are fully protected. Our current scheme for working age claimants is more generous than most other local councils, and therefore any increase in uptake in this scheme has an impact on the level of Council Tax generated.

We have provided options to move towards an income banded scheme and to potentially cap the support provided, but this comes with the risk of potentially not recovering some of the additional Council Tax charges that would be levied as a result.

The financial impact of these proposals and any changes are not factored into the MTFP forecast at this time, and the consultation results will be reviewed by our Cabinet on 19 November 2025. The consultation on the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme continues to run until 26 September 2025.

In 2025/26, we used £3.503 million of reserves to balance the budget, which will have to be addressed in 2026/27. We may need to use a certain level of reserves again in 2026/27, however such an approach is only a temporary and very short-term measure, with more long-term options needing to be identified, to address our budget shortfalls.

Recognising the budget gap we face, we have agreed with Cabinet that we must consider options to also raise Council Tax. As part of the Cabinet report on 17 September 2025 we have presented four options for Council Tax, based on:

- Option 1 – a 0% rise in council tax.
- Option 2 – a 2% rise in council tax - specifically relating to the adult social care precept element.
- Option 3 – a 3% rise in council tax – the core element of Council Tax.
- Option 4 - a 5% rise in Council Tax – based on a combined 3% rise in core council tax and 2% rise in the adult social care precept element.

Every 1% increase in Council Tax raises an addition £3 million for the Council, and this has a significant impact on the funding position of the Council and the potential scale of any savings that will need to be made, on top of the £288 million of savings the council has had to find over the last 16 years. The impact on the deficits for various council tax increases is set out below (please note all figures are in millions):

Options	Description	Deficit for 2026/27	Deficit for 2027/28	Deficit for 2028/29	Deficit for 2029/30	Total deficit over the 4-year period
Option 1	No Council Tax increase across the 4-year period.	£20,047	£16,926	£19,995	£14,051	£71,019
Option 2	A 2% annual increase in Adult Social Care Precept each year across the 4-year period.	£14,047	£10,826	£13,795	£7,751	£46,419
Option 3	A 3% annual increase in the core Council Tax each year across the 4-year period.	£11,047	7,726	£10,595	£4,451	£33,819
Option 4	A 5% annual increase in Council Tax (3% core Council Tax and 2% Adult Social Care Precept) each year across the 4-year period (in line with the Government's assumptions).	£5,047	£1,726	£4,495	£1,649 surplus	£9,619

The Council intends to undertake a two-phase consultation on its budget and MTFP planning this year. The first phase of the consultation seeks views on the size of the financial challenges faced by the council and views on how further savings can be found, including considering options 1-4 outlined above for raising council tax, and outlines the already agreed savings. This consultation commences today, Friday 19 September, and will run through to Friday 14 November 2025.

On 19 November 2025, Cabinet will consider a further update report on its financial forecasts, and this will include any budget savings proposals which are being developed to help balance the 2026/27 budget, alongside an outline of progress to develop more substantial transformational savings. A second public consultation on these savings measures will take place between late November 2025 and January 2026.

It is very important that we continue to involve key partners and the public in our decision-making process. We would be grateful if you could consider the contents of this report and take time to read the Cabinet report dated 17 September 2025 and submit any comments to the first budget consultation by **Friday 14 November 2025**. There is a useful and detailed executive summary contained within the 17 September 2025 Cabinet report, which you can access [here](#).

When commenting on the consultations, please consider:

- If any of the proposals will have a negative impact on your organisation's priorities and workload.
- If you consider this will be the case, please let us know how these might be minimised.
- If you feel a proposed change should not go ahead, please let us know what alternatives the council could consider to meet its budget reduction target.
- If you consider that the proposals will have a detrimental impact on priority or characteristic groups, please let us know.

In addition to consulting with organisations such as yours, the public is being encouraged to give its views by:

- Completing our online survey - paper copies are available from any of our [libraries](#).
- Attending online consultation events happening on 14 and 22 October
- Emailing [letstalkcountydurham@durham.gov.uk](mailto:letstalkcountydurham@durham.gov.uk)

Full details of this consultation, and consultation covering our Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age people and Exceptions to the Empty and Unfurnished Properties and Second Homes Council Tax Premium are available at [Let's Talk County Durham](#)

The results of these consultations will be reported and summarised in subsequent Medium Term Financial Planning Cabinet reports, including the Council's budget reports to Cabinet on 21 January 2026 and 11 February 2026, followed by a decision by Full Council on 18

February 2026. These meetings are quite late in the budget planning cycle but reflect the timescales of Government funding announcements and the challenges this creates.

Thank you for your consideration and should you have comments, please forward them to [letstalkcountydurham@durham.gov.uk](mailto:letstalkcountydurham@durham.gov.uk) by **Friday 14 November 2025**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Darby', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Darby  
Corporate Director of Resources  
Durham County Council

## **Exceptions to the Empty and Unfurnished Properties and Second Homes Council Tax Premium**

We are considering making changes to our Section 13A policy which provides discretionary exemptions to the Council Tax premium on empty and unfurnished properties and second homes. This is over and above what the Government provides.

### **Background**

In 2023, as part of its Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill, the Government introduced a law which allows local councils to charge higher Council Tax on properties that are defined as long term empty homes and ones that are only occupied occasionally (second homes). This is called the Long Term Empty Property and Second Home Council Tax Premium.

For homes which have been empty and unfurnished for more than one year this premium can be between 100% and 300% depending on how long the property has been empty and for second homes it is 100%.

The government recognised though, that it may not be appropriate for these Council Tax premiums to apply in some circumstances, so it set some mandatory exceptions.

You can view more detailed information about the premium, and circumstances where an exception might be made, on our [Long Term Empty Property and Second Home Council Tax Premium](#) page. We have no powers to change the Government's exceptions.

In all circumstances the owner is still liable for 100% Council Tax on the property.

### **Additional exceptions**

In addition to the mandatory exceptions, we have local powers to add to these exceptions. This is to support owners who have:

- properties that might be proving difficult to sell or rent due to local market conditions,
- properties in need of renovation,
- properties where owners are experiencing legal or technical issues such as probate or planning,
- second homes which are periodically occupied in certain job-related circumstances, or are a pitch occupied by a caravan, or a mooring occupied by a boat,
- and properties being kept empty as part of a regeneration scheme.

We outline the additional relief in our Section 13A policy. **It is this policy that we are considering changing.**

### **Why are we considering the changes?**

Currently our Section 13A policy does not set any time limit on exceptions over and above those set by the Government. So, if a property owner can provide appropriate evidence, they can continue to access the Section 13A relief.

As part of budget setting, we are looking at various savings opportunities. Changes to the Section 13A policy, could contribute additional income to reduce the savings we need to make, whilst also further helping bring properties back into use.

The discretionary relief we apply through the Section 13A policy is above that offered by other local councils, with the few councils that do provide relief, doing so for a limited time period.

As of 31 July 2025, the owners of 343 long-term empty homes and 16 second homes were receiving relief totalling £849,529 over and above the Government's exceptions.

**Options being considered**

We are considering the following changes to the policy from 1 April 2026 and would like your views on these options.

**Option 1: Fully align the existing Section 13A policy with the Government regulations**

This option would see the local discretion removed and our reduction scheme being fully aligned to the Government regulations. This approach would:

- simplify the support available making it easier for residents to understand,
- simplify the administration of support,
- promote properties being brought back into productive use at the earliest opportunity.

**Option 2: Introduce a 12 month time limit cap to our Section 13A policy**

This would see the current local discretion retained but the Section 13A policy would limit the time the relief could be in place for. It is proposed that this discretionary time limit be an additional 12 months in the circumstances outlined above, allowing 24 months of support from the council tax premium charge (36 months from the date of first becoming empty and unfurnished).

**Option 3: No changes to the current Section 13A policy**

This would see the Section 13A policy remaining as it is with no cap on the amount of time a discretion from the premium charge is available for those properties classed as empty properties or second homes.

To note, any Section 13A awards are always intended as short-term assistance only and can be subject to reviews being carried out throughout the financial year in which they have been applied and are subject to an annual review. In all circumstances the liable person remains subject to a 100% Council Tax charge for the property.

For more information about the Section 13A policy, please read the [Cabinet report 17 September, Agenda Item 5](#).

**Have your say on the council's budget**

While you are here, [have your say on our budget proposals for 2026/27](#), as well as on how we meet the financial challenges we face over the next 4 years